HAYWOOD HILLQUIT

ONE BIG UNION OR TRANSFORMED AF OF L?

A DEBATE ON SOCIALIST PARTY STRATEGY

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EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY TIM DAVENPORT

One Big Union
or
Transformed AF of L?

A Debate on Socialist Party Strategy
Between William D. Haywood
and Morris Hillquit

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Introduction

On Thursday, January 11, 1912, the great hall of the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, located at 7 E 7th Street in New York City, was filled to capacity. About 1500 men and women had presented the red Socialist Party membership cards necessary for admission. Several members of the rival Socialist Labor Party attempted to slide into seats through use of borrowed credentials; they were immediately recognized by the movement veteran sitting in the chair, Local New York organizer Julius Gerber,[1] and were immediately expelled from the building.[2]

Debating the question "What Shall the Attitude of the Socialist Party Be Toward the Economic Organization of the Workers?" on this evening would be two of the party's most important factional leaders. Representing the left wing, a group centered around Charles H. Kerr's Chicago magazine, *International Socialist Review,* was William D. "Big Bill" Haywood, a rough-and-tumble former top official of the Western Federation of Miners and founding member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Speaking on behalf of the SPA's "constructive socialist" regulars was the erudite Morris Hillquit, successful New York City labor attorney, socialist historian, and author of several books popularizing socialist ideas for a broad readership.

According to the predetermined rules of combat, Haywood and Hillquit were each allotted one hour: 30 minutes for an opening statement, 20 minutes for rebuttal, and 10 minutes to close.

Haywood went first. After proudly reciting the red revolutionary slogans of the famous IWW Preamble to the applause of the faithful, Haywood immediately moved to start a brawl of personalities, interspersing long passages from socialist authorities with sniping personal attacks. Haywood condemned Hillquit for working to "compromise and arbitrate the working class on the economic field" and sought to connect him directly to the American Federation of Labor, a cautious agglomeration of craft unions particularly loathed by the left wing. While "I can't put him in the Civic Federation,[3] in the picture which I have on the table," declared Haywood, "I can show, and will,

that he dragged the Socialist Party ... to the portals of an organization that should not be recognized by the Socialist Party." The AF of L was no more than a "combination of job trusts," asserted Haywood, a group seeking only "to control the skilled workers in the different lines of industry" but "having no desire, no purpose, no intention of organizing the working class."

Hillquit, ever the statesman, did not rise to Haywood's challenge, laughing off the strawman effort to "try to prove my affiliation with the American Federation of Labor or with the Civic Federation." He instead laid out a list of axioms, declaring abolition of the wage system impossible without participation of the workers themselves, identifying the Socialist Party to be the labor movement's political arm, and declaring the party and its mission were doomed unless the enthusiastic support of the working class could be engendered. Hillquit dismissed the IWW as "a purely anarchistic organization" that brought nothing but "the spirit of bitterness, the spirit of anarchy, the spirit of direct action, the anti-socialist spirit" into the Socialist Party's midst. Moreover, he added, the IWW was ineffectual: "What does the IWW do to the American Federation of Labor? Who in the American Federation of Labor cares for the IWW? What do the organized workers or the unorganized workers know about the IWW? Nothing. But we have been fighting. We are fighting. We will be fighting until we scratch each other's noses."

Haywood continued to attack Hillquit as a toady for the capitalist American Federation of Labor during his rebuttal, again pulling long quotations from figures of authority to use as a cudgel, reciting extracts from President William Howard Taft, ex-President Theodore Roosevelt, Secretary of War Henry Stimson, and United Mine Workers President John Mitchell, as well as Karl Kautsky and lines published by Hillquit himself. He made a major misstep by attempting to paint Hillquit as a militarist, however, with Hillquit adeptly countering that the same armed citizen militia he advocated in print had been for decades official policy of the international socialist movement.

Writing about the debate the next day, a reporter at the *New York Call*—a publication friendly to Hillquit, to be sure—indicated that "the personal attacks upon Hillquit by Haywood were answered ... briefly and with striking convincingness." The report continued:

> Haywood's chief argument was that Hillquit and [NEC member Victor] Berger truckled down to the AF of L for financial assistance during the mayoralty campaign in Los Angeles. Hillquit replied that this thing had

> been done before, notably in the [1906–07] case of Haywood himself. When he was tried for his life, assistance was asked in his behalf from the AF of L, and the organization which Haywood now brands as a capitalist organization did much to save Haywood's life.
>
> A tumultuous applause greeted these remarks of Hillquit, and Haywood himself looked somewhat abashed.[4]

The seems to have been the decisive blow of the debate, since Haywood was thereafter in position to do little more than vilify the leadership of the AF of L while professing no quarrel with the rank and file of the "jobs trusts" and assert the superiority of industrialism over craft organization. These propositions Hillquit was happy to echo, one-upping Haywood by calling the present leaders of the federation "utterly incompetent, utterly reactionary, and often corrupt" and extensively quoting Max S. Hayes of the *Cleveland Citizen,* not only a veteran Socialist Party activist in the ranks of the AF of L but for years a columnist in *International Socialist Review,* as an authority that socialist influence in the AF of L was growing. With the existing unions gradually evolving from a craft basis to an industrial basis, Hillquit said, the choice seemed simple when the nearly 1.2 million member federation was stood next to the IWW—an organization rendered impotent by factional splits that had slashed its membership from 50,000 to 5,000, "scattered all over the country, having absolutely no business in the labor movement."

That the accomplished Morris Hillquit should have outmaneuvered Big Bill Haywood on a New York City debate stage should cause as little surprise as would a triumph of the burly Haywood over the diminutive Hillquit in a bar fight. What remains a matter of some puzzlement, however, is how little the actual tactical differences between the IWW and the AF of L unions were mentioned, with Haywood briefly detailing the numbing effect of employer contracts on the class struggle but few other words passing. There were no histrionics regarding the IWW's "opposition to political action" or its "advocacy of crime, sabotage, or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working class"—matters made expulsion-worthy offenses in the Socialist Party less than seven months later.

That storm had not yet broke.

Tim Davenport
Corvallis, Oregon
March 15, 2026

I. Opening Statement by William D. Haywood

Comrade Chairman, Comrade Hillquit,
Comrades and Fellow-Workers:—

"One Big Union" should be the slogan of every socialist agitator, on the platform and in the workshop. Socialism means to organize the workers in industrial [production] so that we will control the management of the workshops and through our organization we will have the collective ownership of all the means of production and distribution. An organization that sets forth the class struggle is the kind of an organization that the Socialist Party should at all times endorse and work for. Such an organization I have in view when I will read you the following preamble:

> The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among the millions of working people, and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.
>
> Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production, and abolish the wage system.
>
> We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes trades unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trades unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping to defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trades unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.
>
> These conditions can be changed and the interests of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.
>
> Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

> It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for the everyday struggle with the capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.[5] [*Applause.*]

That is the position and has been the position of the socialist movement of the world. I want to quote Karl Marx on trade unions:

> Trades unions work well as centers of resistance against the encroachments of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerrilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of using their organized forces as a lever for the emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wage system.[6]

Here Karl Marx clearly defines the power of the working class and advocates the general strike; and in advocating the general strike he has been followed by the socialists of Great Britain. [*Applause.*] And now, to show you what I believe should be the attitude of the socialists of the United States—and incidentally I want to remark that there have been socialists in the United States who have been desirous to taking on some of the British attitude, but I rather think that those same ones will probably not agree with the action of the British Socialist Party[7] in advocating the general strike—I want to read you what will show the attitude of the British Socialist Party with regard to the railroad workers and their advice to the railroad workers, set forth in the following resolution:

> London, Dec. 15 [1911].— With the passage of the following resolution by the executive committee of the newly formed British Socialist Party, addressed to the railroad men whose strike is still pending, the traditional policy of the British socialist has been departed from, never to be resumed.
>
> Hitherto the policy of socialists has been to leave the labor unions severely alone. During the strike in August, however, the socialists realized that they were nowhere in touch with the workers in their fight—the greatest fight ever waged by united labor against united capital. With the decision of the special commission that turned down the men's demands, thoughtful socialists foreseeing a renewal of the war determined that the time for aloofness had passed, and that the time when

> the socialist party could line up squarely with the workers in their unions had arrived.
>
> With this end in view the resolution was drafted and has been scattered broadcast throughout the land. The British Socialist Party stands ready to give every possible assistance to the workers in the fight that is now drawing near. The resolution reads:
>
> "It is with no desire to interfere in your business, but as well-wishers to the cause of labour, and therefore concerned for its effective organisation, that we ask you to consider what follows.
>
> "Your wretchedly low wages and the sweated conditions under which you work are a scandal to the nation.
>
> "In August last you wisely and courageously determined upon a big united effort to improve the state of things, and on the 19th of that month you made yourselves masters of the situation by withdrawing your labour in a mass, and thereby creating a deadlock of the railway traffic. By standing firmly together for a few days (at the longest) you could have enforced every reasonable demand that you made. The companies were helpless and the government was at its wits end.
>
> "Yet, in the very moment of your success the fruits of victory were rejected by your trade union officials—assisted by leading 'Labour' MPs—in their stupid and cowardly acceptance of a royal commission of inquiry, a state device which you had contemptuously declined but a few days before."

Now I want to say that I propose here tonight to tie Comrade Hillquit up with just such trade union officials as are spoken of in the resolution. Not only that, but I propose to show that Comrade Hillquit is a part, not of a royal commission—perhaps that's due to the fact that we have no royal commissions in this country—but that he is a part of a commission and that he does compromise and arbitrate the working class on the economic field. And I propose to show by Comrade Hillquit's works that the political and economic movement when moving in large scope is practically the same, and becomes the political struggle of the working class. I propose to identify Comrade Hillquit in an official manner with the American Federation of Labor. I can't put him in the Civic Federation,[8] in the picture which I have on the table; but I can show, and will, that he dragged the Socialist Party, young giant as it is, clean and pure, to Atlanta, to the portals of an organization that should not be recognized by the Socialist Party. [*Applause.*]

> The object of the directors and friends of the government in trapping you into an 'inquiry' was, of course, to gain time and meanwhile to get you

back to work—that is, to break the strike by a trick. Thanks to the incompetency of your own representatives the companies succeeded in getting three months' breathing space in which to prepare for and arrange for your next move.

The railway commission's report gives you nothing—it was never intended to—and the government's new resolution of November 22, asking both sides to meet 'to discuss the best mode of giving effect to the report' of that commission gets you, and can get you, nowhere.

Meanwhile your trade union officials and the leaders of the parliamentary "Labour" Party group appear to be divided between their alarm at your righteous indignation and militant spirit and their own consuming anxiety for peace at any price. And a ballot is being taken by them on the question of whether, after all, to strike now. Your officials give you no help to come to a decision, but appear to be merely intent on shouldering all responsibility on to others.

It appears to us that, having given away the magnificent opportunity of August 19 and allowed the companies three months' grace in which to get ready for you, a strike at this present time on the limited lines (railway men only), which at that date might have spelled victory, might now very easily prove unsuccessful.

We, therefore, advise you not to take the risk of a beating, but to make your next effort irresistible by first arranging with your fellow workers, and the seamen, to act all together and simultaneously. Such a combination would be overwhelming if well and faithfully conducted—and surely you will not permit yourselves to be "had" again!

This combination would not only secure the enforcement of your own immediate claims, but would also constitute an invaluable object lesson of the solidarity of labour and its enormous power when acting in concert. It would demonstrate, moreover, the dependence of the whole nation for its very existence upon the workers alone!

Special attention should, of course, be given to the means of your own support during such a holiday. Strike pay in money would be of no use in view of the scarcity of food and the consequent rise in prices. The union funds should be spent beforehand in necessary foodstuffs, and at least three weeks' supply should be stored in every striker's home.

Further, the combined strike must be sudden. A joint strike committee representing the workers in the four allied industries should be appointed, and the power to declare a combined strike without further warning be placed in their hands. Surprise is the most potent ally in class warfare.

Finally, beware that when you do strike it shall be for substance, not for shadow. "Recognition" of your officials by the companies means nothing more than a further series of "arrangements" pledging you to docility and

tame inaction over long agreed periods. See that you keep your hands free at all costs.

Our sympathies are with you, heart and soul; and it is because we are eager to help you that we thus address you to make certain of success beforehand.

The National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party,
21A Maiden Lane, Strand, London, WC.

Now, comrades, it seems to me that the policy set forth in these resolutions should be adopted by the Socialist Party in this country toward, not organized labor, but toward the working class. I believe that if the Socialist Party is doing its full duty, then instead of talking about something that will transpire two years or four years from now, it is the duty of the Socialist Party to go into the anthracite fields, where a strike is due on the 1st of April, and urge them to do as the [British] Socialist Party has urged the railroaders to do. If the socialists of New York were fulfilling their full duty and complying with their mission they would be telling the laundry workers how to win their strike; how to get the engineers to come out in sympathy with them; how to get the drivers to fall in line with them; how to use any expedient method to win their strike. That is the duty of the Socialist Party. But this will never emanate from the American Federation of Labor, nor will it ever take place as long as the Socialist Party under guise of neutrality is following the safe and sane tactics of the trade unions. [*Applause.*]

And this is easy to understand. The American Federation of Labor is not a labor association. [*Applause.*] When the American Federation of Labor moved its headquarters to Washington it was not for the purpose of organizing the workers in the chief industry of that city. It went there for the express purpose of legislative lobbying. The American Federation of Labor as such has always and continually fought the Socialist Party. It is comprised of 11 members, all of whom belong to the Civic Federation, and most of them to the Militia of Christ[9] [*laughter*], also an organization formed to fight the Socialist Party. The Civic Federation, of which the officials of the American Federation of Labor are a part, is an organization launched by one Ralph Easley[10] for the purpose of showing the identity of interest between capital and labor, and especially for the purpose of settling all disputes by arbitration. Whether or not Comrade Hillquit got his ideas from that source, it would be difficult for me to say,

but that he does believe in arbitration, as I have said to you before, I propose to prove.

Now, the American Federation of Labor, which presumes to represent the working class of this country, is composed of 117 international unions, 27,000 local unions, all of them having craft autonomy, all of them entering into agreements with whatever part of the capitalist class employs them, and these 27,000 different agreements are expiring on 27,000 different minutes of the year. And this they refer to as "solidarity!" The membership of the American Federation of Labor, an organization to which we are supposed to be neutral, but which we accord whatever support the Socialist Party gives, is comprised of 2 million members, some of them on paper, but we will give them credit for the full number, because the more they have the worse it is for that kind of labor organization. It would be safe to say that the members of the American Federation of labor pay an average into their treasuries, in dues, fines, assessments, contributions, donations, subscriptions, and strike benefits, at least an average of $2 per month for each member. This would mean $4 million a month, $48 million a year, $480 million in ten years.

Now I would like to have you ask your trade union friends if the purchasing power of their wages has increased during the last ten years. Is it not a fact that the purchasing power of the wages of all the workers has declined in ten years—that is to say, that you can't buy as much bacon, as many baby shoes, nor pay as much for house rent, nor get as good a dress for your wife with the money that you get now as you could ten years ago? The purchasing power is the real wage, and if the purchasing power has declined it means that the wages of the members of the American Federation of Labor have been reduced. And more than that, it means that they have paid $480 million for the reduction. Don't overlook that fact.

Again, I want to say that the American Federation of Labor and its policies have nothing in common with the principles of the Socialist Party. The American Federation of Labor is a combination of job trusts who want to control the skilled workers in the different lines of industry—having no desire, no purpose, no intention of organizing the working class. Many of the organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor contrive by their rules to keep women out of their organizations. Others draw the color line. Some of them bar foreigners. Others refuse to accept a boy under 18 years of age. Again, others refuse to accept men who have exceeded 55 years of age. They have established

numerous and different methods of limiting the number of their membership, and this perhaps accounts for the fact that the numerical strength of organized labor in the United States today is less than it was a quarter of a century ago, notwithstanding the fact that the population of this country has more than doubled.

Now, after Comrade Hillquit takes his 30 minutes I want to proceed to show you the different methods devised by the American Federation of Labor to limit the membership of that organization. And then I want to fairly ask you if this is the organization that should be supported by the Socialist Party of America. [*Applause*.]

II. Opening Statement by Morris Hillquit

I hope, comrades, Comrade Haywood will not continue within the next 30 minutes to try to prove my affiliation with the American Federation of Labor or with the Civic Federation. [*Laughter*.] I believe, comrades, it would be a waste of time. Personally, I hope you will not consider this debate at all as a personal contest between Comrade Haywood and myself, or as a sort of battle of wits or a prize debate. It is not—at least, as far as I am concerned. I consider it, on the contrary, an honest effort of two members of the Socialist Party, two comrades, to gain some light and clarity on a very vital problem before the socialist movement; and I think everything else should be subordinated to this end and that we should strive to approach this subject with all candor, fairness, and earnestness which we have. And in pursuance of this intention also I shall for the time being have to defer the pleasure of answering some of the personal allusions of Comrade Haywood and to go straight to the subject. I shall also, before coming to the issue between us, try to present to you the general view of the subject from the point of view of those who do not agree with Comrade Haywood. I think it is a more orderly method of debate. Comrade Haywood has stated his position affirmatively and positively. I shall endeavor to state mine. The differences between us will then be noted, the issue formulated; and within the next two innings which we both have we shall discuss those differences and issues.

Now I shall say, first of all, comrades, quite frankly, that I have no new message for you. My stand on the economic organizations of labor is the stand which the Socialist Party in this country has repeatedly taken and expressed at national conventions, and I want to say to you that Comrade Haywood reading from the resolution of the British Socialist Party does not change the situation. Comrade Haywood may be somewhat misled by the name of the British Socialist Party. He may fall into the error of believing that it is the party of British socialists or English socialists. It is not, comrades and Comrade Haywood. The British socialist movement is represented by the Independent Labour Party[11] and by the Social Democratic Party.[12] The British Socialist

Party,[13] so-called, has a grandiloquent name, as some of our organizations likewise have, but it has absolutely no standing, membership, or position with the International Socialist Committee. It is composed of a few hundred freaks, and nobody in England pays any attention of any kind to the doings, sayings, or resolutions of that so-called British Socialist Party.[14] So please don't mistake that long resolution for a resolution of the British socialists. It is not.

Comrade Haywood also will not find support for his special or peculiar attitude to organized labor in Karl Marx. Why he read this passage to you I cannot quite conceive. He said Karl Marx in that passage advocates the general strike. The expression did not occur in the passage. Karl Marx was never known to advocate the general strike. The international socialist movement at international congresses has never known to advocate it. But what Marx speaks of in the reference or in the passage quoted by Comrade Haywood is quite definite. He speaks of political action and says that the present methods of trades unions, especially in his time, are insufficient—which we always, all of us, say. So that, as far as the general attitude of international socialism and American socialism are concerned, they are not changed by these quotations.

Now, what is this attitude? I shall try, comrades, to go first, before we come to it, to a few fundamentals of our philosophy and methods. It is useful once in a while for a growing, active, and changing body like us. And I shall state first a few what I may call "Socialist axioms," and upon them I shall try to build up my argument. They are as follows:

1. Our object is the emancipation of labor; that is, the abolition of the wage system.

2. This object can only be accomplished by the workers themselves.

3. It can only be accomplished through the medium of the class struggle.

4. The class struggle must be conducted in both the economic and political fields.

5. In order to be successful, that struggle must be organized; organized economically in the form of labor unions and organized politically as a political party. [*Applause*.]

6. The political hope of labor is the Socialist Party.

7. The Socialist Party is doomed to failure unless it has the support of the workers.

And finally

8. In the United States the Socialist Party has as yet not the full support of the workers, and its immediate aim and mission is to gain that support.

Now, upon these axioms let us see, comrades, our duty.

We will say, first of all, there is no very rigid line of demarcation between the economic and the political organizations of labor. We all know that. That is, economic activity frequently assumes a political phase. On the other hand, political measures are often forced by economic action. But on the whole the distinction and division of functions between these two organizations, the economic and political, are tolerably clear and distinct. In a well balanced labor movement both branches, the economic and the political, work in harmony with each other. Each gains life and point from the support of the other. Now, for this reason, the saying has become current among socialists that the two are of equal importance in the labor movement. We refer to them as "the two arms of the labor movement;" and I will say to you here quite frankly that I cannot fully subscribe to this statement. If the economic and political movements are to be considered the two arms of the labor movement, I should at least be inclined to say that the political organization is the right arm, or at least, if you want, the strong arm. [*Applause*.] In other words, I maintain that at the present stage of the development of the labor movement, the political organization and the political movement are somewhat more important than the economic organization and the economic movement.

In the first place, political action is more conscious and intelligent and effective than economic action. It always signifies mass action—class action, if you want. The economic organization of labor honestly fight for immediate improvements. The socialist movement strives for all immediate betterment of labor conditions, with the ultimate view of abolishing the entire capitalist system. Finally, the ultimate goal of the entire labor movement is political in its nature, and the accomplishment of that aim, no matter how brought about, will be a political act. I, therefore, maintain, without trying to pay undue compliments to our brethren in the economic organizations, that the political organization of labor is today somewhat more important than the economic organization.

Now, then, does it follow, therefore, that we are to neglect the economic organization as useless? By no manner of means. The economic organizations nevertheless have a very important part to play in the general labor movement. First, the immediate gains which they bring into the lives of their members, while they may be small in

comparison, are nevertheless of untold benefit to the workers themselves and their families. By raising the standard of life the members of the trades unions, by according them greater leisure, more opportunities for intellectual development, they make them fitter for the cultural status of the socialist movement, make them more accessible to a full appreciation of the socialist philosophy. The trades unions, outside of the immediate benefits which they confer upon their members, are the very best recruiting fields for the Socialist Party.

Now, under normal conditions there is absolutely no occasion for a quarrel between the two organizations and for a comparison of their respective importance. Both are useful. Both are needed. Both are organic parts of the labor movement. Both work in complete harmony. And that is the end of it. In the United States, however, it so happens that the situation, owing to various historic and economic reasons, has become very much more complicated. The bulk of workers economically organized is unenlightened, narrow, and reactionary, and hence the socialists of this country have always had and still have the task of urging or forcing their brethren in the economic organizations into the lines of greater progress and radicalism. The socialists have also had the task to endeavor at all times to establish relations of harmony and cooperation with the economic organizations of labor, and this problem has been the problem of the American socialist movement at all times. It has agitated our minds since the first day of the organization of the Socialist Party or its predecessor, the Socialist Labor Party. It has appeared before us in all possible forms and guises, and it is now parading again before us, this time under the somewhat new and fanciful title of "industrial unionism against craft unionism."

It is not an entirely novel proposition. But its special aspects today may, if you want, be distinguished or divided under three separate heads. The first is this:

1. Is the industrial form of organization superior as a weapon in the class struggle to the form of trade organization?

2. If it is, is it within the province of the Socialist Party to advocate and work for the industrial form of economic labor organizations? And

3. If it is, should we socialists as such strive to spread the general notion of industrial organization within the existing labor organizations within the ranks of the American Federation of Labor, or shall we go out and build a new labor movement in the hope that we might be able to create something superior and more powerful than the existing organizations of labor?

Now, these, comrades, I think are the actual issues between us, devoid of all ornamentations and personal compliments which we may exchange occasionally. And I will add that for the purposes of this discussion I will define a trades union organization as one whose unit is composed of local workers of one specific trade or craft. An industrial union organization is one whose units are composed of local workers of an entire or complete industry, embracing several trades or crafts. And I will say, as far as the form of organization is concerned, this is the only difference. The other questions—questions of class consciousness, questions of low dues, questions of open boards—have nothing to do with this particular issue. Please bear that in mind! Now, then, within that definition and with the issues as I have formulated them, I shall try to briefly take them up, one after the other.

And, in the first place, I have no hesitancy in answering the first question, as I formulated it, in the affirmative. In other words, I fully and truly believe that the industrial form of organization is superior to the trade form of organization. [*Applause*.] I think every thoughtful student of the labor movement and every socialist who has observed the trend of development in the labor movement will agree with that statement. There is no issue between us; no issue within the Socialist Party on that subject. We all recognize that the industrial form of organization is in better accord with the modern organization of capital; that it is the present tendency in the labor movement; that it is progressive and effective.

But having said that, comrades, and having said that in absolute candor and sincerity, I want to add that I do believe a great many of our comrades sorely exaggerate the importance of the form of organization. In other words, they somehow imagine that the mere organization on certain lines, the structural change in technical form, if you want, in itself will somehow work magic wonders and change the entire countenance of the labor movement and of every man and woman in it.

It is absolutely contrary to our general philosophy. It is contrary to our general interpretation of social or political institutions or organizations. And I want to caution you agains such exaggerations. In other words, what I do say is this: If we should today take the American Federation of Labor and reorganize it on an industrial plane, leaving, however, Mr. Gompers, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Morrison, and Mr. Duncan at the head, not of an executive council, but of a sort of general industrial council; leaving all of the present members of the present American Federation of Labor, with their limited intelligence, just as members of the newly formed industrial American Federation of Labor, I assure you

that there would not be a substantial or magic change in the spirit of the labor movement. [*Applause*.] The heads of that new organization would still fraternize with the Civic Federation. The members of it would still be reactionary. And a strike or lockout might, perhaps, be even more difficult than it is today, because it would require the consent of the entire industrial union, and Mr. Gompers at the head of such an industrial union will be tardy in giving such consents, I assure you. And, on the other hand, I want to say to you that if this American Federation of Labor, organized along craft lines and trade lines as it is—if its members should be imbued with the spirit of class consciousness; if they should cease to be individually as narrow and conservative as they are, I assure you no form of organization would retain them from class action, from mass action, and from effective action. [*Applause*.]

In other words, comrades, what I claim is that the first and most important task of the American socialists today is to imbue the workers of this country, no matter where you find them and no matter in what organization, with the teachings of socialism, with the understanding of their class interests, with the spirit of solidarity, which is the soul of the labor movement. [*Applause*.] And I say if you have done that, the form of organization will easily find itself. We still, between the two, would favor the industrial form of organization, no doubt. But this is the shell. This is the form. We want the kernel, the substance, the soul. And this is socialism.

My second point is that it is not within the province of the Socialist Party to make a special propaganda for the industrial form of organization or for any form of organization of labor. Why? Because this is a technical, internal matter. Let me give you an illustration. Assume for a moment the American Federation of Labor suddenly, in annual convention in Atlanta or elsewhere, adopts the following resolution: "Resolved, That the Socialist Party of the United States reorganize itself, first, by abolishing the principle of state autonomy from their scheme of organization; by abolishing the National Committee and by electing a president of the Socialist Party." How would we receive it? We would laugh. Why? We would say, "How do you gentlemen come to prescribe to us our form of organization, our internal machinery of work? What are you? You are Democrats, you are Republicans and, perhaps, a few Socialists. How do you come to tell us Socialists how to work?"

Now, then, suppose we come with our convention: "What are you?" "We are socialists, true enough, but as far as our trades are concerned, some of us are employers of labor, some of us are professionals, some of

us are farmers, some of us are workers, organized and unorganized." And what mandate do we have to dictate to the existing organizations of labor the technical form of their organization? Absolutely none. Absolutely just as little as they have to interfere with ours.

My third point is this, that while it is perfectly true that the industrial form of organization in the abstract is superior to the trade form of organization, the unfortunate part about it is that the over enthusiastic advocates of that industrialism, seeing nothing but it, are unusually prone to go our of their way and to form new rival labor organizations to the existing organizations of labor. And I say no greater mistake can be made within the Socialist Party; no greater blow can be dealt to the Socialist Party from within, than by organizing rival economic labor organizations. [*Applause*.] They start out by organizing, or by claiming to organize, the unorganized. As a matter of fact, they don't. As a matter of fact, within a very short time we find that whatever little size they have, they have gained only through rival organizations. You will find that within a very short time the result is always the same. Take the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance. Take the IWW. They start out to organize the "industrial workers of the world." Within two or three years they have split up from 50,000 to 10,000, from 10,000 to 5,000 individuals, scattered all over the country, having absolutely no business in the labor movement, doing nothing but creating dissensions and strife, not in the labor movement, but in the socialist movement. [*Applause*.] They are driven to desperation by the absence of success. They develop into extremists.

I say, without hesitancy, the IWW is a purely anarchistic organization. And I will prove it. All that we get from them is the spirit of bitterness, the spirit of anarchy, the spirit of direct action, the anti-socialist spirit brought into our midst. What does the IWW do to the American Federation of Labor? Who in the American Federation of Labor cares for the IWW? What do the organized workers or the unorganized workers know about the IWW? Nothing. But we have been fighting. We are fighting. We will be fighting until we scratch each other's noses. [*Applause*.]

III. Rebuttal by Bill Haywood

Comrade Hillquit has just such an idea of industrial unionism as I expected him to describe. [*Applause*.] He seems to imagine that industrial unionism is simply an enlarged kind of craft unionism. I will say to Comrade Hillquit that industrial unionism comprehends all that socialism comprehends, and that industrial unionism is socialism with its working clothes on. [*Applause*.]

Comrade Hillquit has likewise asserted that IWW is an anarchistic organization. And with the same assurance, and with perhaps as good proof, I will prove to him that the American Federation of Labor is a capitalist organization. [*Applause*.] And I will take for my first witness the president of the United States. [*Laughter*.] He says:

> There is one thing to be said for the trades unions in America which the captains of industry have not actually observed. In France the trades unionists are strongly socialistic. It is true, in the late struggle there was a strong anarchistic current by which the unionists opposed themselves against every form of authority. It is also true that the trades union movement of England makes greater strides toward socialism; and it is not necessary for me to show you the deplorable results that we would have in this country if trades unionism should become a synonym for socialism.
>
> Those who today control the American Federation of Labor and all the important railroad brotherhoods have undertaken a serious and hostile position and have set their faces like flint against the propaganda of socialist doctrines. They are in favor of private property and our present social system, and they wish to simply bring certain modifications by which can be established a condition of equality in the struggle between the employers and the employees, thus putting a check to the abuses that grow out of the present system of unchecked monopoly. And I believe every one of you who have at heart the present institutions should recognize the just struggle that is being fought by the influential leaders of the unions, and we should willingly accord all of our sympathy and help to these champions of a just cause.[15]

And one of these champions must be Comrade Hillquit.

Now I will take the position of President Taft for one side of the coin and we will reverse the coin and say that the Socialist Party is opposed to the officials of the American Federation of Labor and the leaders of all the important brotherhoods if they are standing for present day institutions. We, the Socialists, stand here to change them by remedial measures, not by step-at-a-time programs, not by reforms. We revolutionary socialists say this system is too rotten to hold another patch. [*Applause*.] And we are going to change the system in spite of the fact that we find the officials of our organizations going to Washington begging money from the American Federation of Labor. Under date of November 3, the following motion was submitted by Comrade Berger:

> That a request be made to the American Federation of Labor convention, through President Gompers and Secretary Morrison, that the federation assist beforehand in the Los Angeles campaign and thus prove the solidarity of labor.[16]

Comrades Berger, Goebel, Hillquit, Lewis, and Spargo voted in the affirmative; Comrades Hunter and Carey in the negative.[17] And in speaking of this Comrade Spargo says, "In the present instance, however, events forced us to be practically allies of the American Federation of Labor."

Now, to prove a little more definitely that we are getting close to this American Federation of Labor and its methods, I want to quote from another president or a former president of the United States:

> Washington, Oct. 23, 1902
>
> To the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission.
>
> Gentlemen:—
>
> At the request both of the operators and of the miners, I have appointed you a commission to inquire into, consider, and pass upon the questions in controversy in connection with the strike in the anthracite regions and the causes out of which the controversy arose.
>
> By the action you recommend, which the parties in interest have in advance consented to abide by, you will endeavor to establish regulations between the employers and the wage workers in the anthracite fields on a just and permanent basis and as far as possible do away with any causes

> for the recurrence of such difficulties as those which you have been called upon to settle.
>
> I submit to you herewith the published statement of the operators, following which I named you as the members of the commission.
>
> ***Theodore Roosevelt***

I take it that there is no socialist that will agree that it is any part of our philosophy to establish a lasting and permanent basis upon which the manufacturers will hold the machinery of production. If I understand the philosophy of socialism and the program of the party correctly, it is our purpose to just as rapidly as possible overthrow the capitalist class and take the machinery of production ourselves. But we find that one of the officials of the American Federation of Labor stands directly in line with the president of the United States. In clause 4:

> Experience shows that the trade agreement is the only effective method by which it is possible to regulate questions arising between employer and employee in large industries; that a trade agreement is the only possible way to establish the relations between employers and wage workers in the anthracite fields on a just and permanent basis and as far as possible do away with any cause of recurrence of such difficulties as those you have been called upon to settle.
>
> Respectfully submitted,
> ***John Mitchell***

Now, I want to call your attention to what Karl Kautsky says in regard to those who try to divide labor:

> Today the worst enemies of the working class are not the stupid, reactionary statesmen who hope to keep down the labor movement through openly repressive measures. Its worst enemies are the pretended friends who encourage craft unions and thus attempt to cut off the skilled trades from the rest of their class.[18]

I said I would tie Comrade Hillquit up so close to the American Federation of Labor that he could not possibly get away. Here is a protocol entered into between the Cloak and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Association and the Cloak Makers' Union; and the unique feature, reading from the protocol, is the fact that it was not intended as a

temporary agreement, but as a permanent treaty designed to avert violent contests between the manufacturers and workers for all time. To this end the protocol attempted to establish efficient agencies for the orderly adjustment of all disputes which might arise between the employers and the employees, without cessation of work, or other serious disturbance to the trade. It reads:

> In conclusion we wish to express our gratification at the fair and harmonious relations between the parties to the protocol, and our conviction that eventually the arrangement between the employers and employees as embodied in the protocol will develop into a lasting and permanent adjustment of the relations between the employers and employees of the cloak manufacturing industry and will serve as a model for many similar industries.

You will note the identical language. And I want to say to you that this is signed by Comrade Hillquit, who is the secretary of this arbitration committee, which proposes to tie the hands of the working class not temporarily, but permanently with a lasting agreement. And this protocol goes much further, because it provides that no strike can take place until the arbitration committee has been invited to look into the question; and in the event of any worker quitting his work there is a fine provided for that member.

The same provision is true in the United Mine Workers of America. And to bring the matter down to date, we have here a letter under the heading of the Ladies' Waist and Dressmakers' Union under date of January 11: "We enclose herewith a copy of the new agreement which we desire you to enter into with the Ladies' Waiste and Dressmakers' Union." I am told that Comrade Hillquit is also attorney for this union.

Comrade Hillquit: He is not. Unfortunately, he is not.

Comrade Haywood: Well, perhaps some other comrade socialist, who is ardently in favor of continuing the present system.

We look into Comrade Hillquit's police measures to continue these agreements, if you will, and again I want to line up this deadly parallel to show how the minds of great men rush into the same channel. I am now quoting from a news item in the *New York Times* of November 9 [1911], in which the secretary of war is popularizing the army. Secretary of War

Stimson[19] says this is the great work of the future. I am not going to read it all:

> The great work of the future (said Mr. Stimson) is to popularize the army. The theory of the army generally is old and obsolete. We think of the soldier in the regular army as a specialist and a professional man. That is the idea that goes back to the army of Frederick the Great and his professional fighters. Such a conception is inconsistent now with our other ideals of government. We should take an example from the country of Switzerland, where the army is held as a school of patriotism. It is believed that men will go into it long enough to learn their duties and then go back to civil life.

And then, taking up *Socialism in Theory and Practice* by Comrade Hillquit, we find that "Socialism stands for the abolition of all wars and all armies, but it recognizes that within the modern social system"—under the methods of the American Federation of Labor—"this is an unattainable ideal."

> The practical socialist program, therefore, advocates what the socialists consider the next best step—introduction of a national democratic militia system instead of that of the standing army. * * *
>
> The militia system of Switzerland is the socialist model of existing military organization...

...Now, this is what Comrade Hillquit said, not what Stimson said... [*laughter and applause*]

> ...though the socialists do not consider it perfect, and strongly advocate certain improvements, especially the election of officers and the military education and training of youth as a part of the general education system. * * *
>
> But the principal virtue of a true democratic militia is that it leaves the military power in the hands of the people and prevents the ruling class from turning it into a tool of oppression and despotism. The only people that is really a free people is an armed people, and the people as such can be properly armed only under a general militia system. * * *
>
> [T]he arming and training of all male citizens, makes the reform of almost as great importance to the working class of the countries free from standing armies as to the workingmen in most military states.[20]

Comrades, I never knew before that we were going to have a militia under socialism. I supposed that under socialism there would be a free working class in the world; that no part of the time of the working class would be devoted to making guns, and certainly not the sons of socialists would be taught in the art of murder.

Am I speaking now of direct action? It is not I, but it must be Comrade Hillquit who must be blamed. And I want to say to you that I don't believe that this is any part of the socialist program; that I think that this program is a wicked, cruel, indecent lie. [*Applause*.]

That we intend to organize the workers on the industrial field to produce things novel, to produce things beautiful, and to establish such a brotherhood between the workers of one state and the workers of one nation and another nation that we will have a peaceful system throughout the world—that is my idea of what the socialist program means. [*Applause*.]

IV. Rebuttal by Morris Hillquit

First of all, comrades, in reply to the few personal allusions. Unfortunately, it is necessary. The passage from my *Socialism in Theory and Practice* on the socialist program, with reference to militarism and the advocacy of the militia system on the Swiss model—I didn't invent that. I am very sorry to learn that Comrade Haywood did not know or does not believe that it is part of the international socialist program. [*Applause*.] However, whether he does believe or doesn't believe, the fact is that it is. The quotation read by him is supported by Édouard Vaillant,[21] speaking in behalf of the ultra-Marxian, ultra-revolutionary party of the Guesdists.[22] He can also find it word by word in Bebel's *Nicht stehendes Heer, sondern Volkswehr!*[23] He can also find it, for that matter, in every other socialist program. And the idea is a very simple one. We are not discussing here the future socialist state. [*Applause*.] In the modern state Comrade Haywood is speaking about revolution and about struggles of all kinds. The socialists of the world believe that in such struggles, or in the event of such revolutions, rather than have the governing ruling classes hire professional assassins, the workers themselves should arm themselves. [*Applause*.]

Comrade Haywood thinks that Mr. Stimson says the same thing, and thinks he condemns me thereby. Why, if Stimson understands it and Haywood doesn't, all the better for Stimson and all the worse for Haywood. [*Applause*.]

Comrade Haywood also charges me—and that was after about seven threats—with being a part and parcel of the American Federation of Labor and of capitalism incarnate, because I am a member of the board of arbitration created between the cloak makers and the cloak bosses. Now, this is a very simple thing, comrades. There was a long strike. You all know about it. I was not a cloak maker, nor was I their attorney. When the strike was settled they created a permanent board of arbitration, and their agreement provided that the employers were to select one arbitrator, the employees were to select one arbitrator, and the umpire was selected in the person of Mr. Brandeis.[24] It depended upon the workers' arbitrator

as to how much they could get out of any and every one of such questions or discussions between employers and employees. The workers in the cloak industry asked me whether I would not take their part in such controversy. There was no pay attached to it; not much honor; only a little abuse on the part of our friend, Mr. Haywood. And I said: "With pleasure." And the first time we came together on a discussion, I am proud to say now—I wouldn't have bragged if I hadn't been challenged—I succeeded in actually getting the cloak makers' union the right to send delegates to inspect the grievances of the workers, which they had not had. I succeeded, after a long, hard fight. And the cloak makers are very much better off and their union is much stronger on that account. And I say to you, comrades, if the time will ever come when the organizations of labor will turn to the socialists generally to represent them in their struggles with capital, then our day has come already. [*Applause*.]

Comrade Haywood also reproaches me, as a member of the National Executive Committee, with having, jointly with Berger and the others, asked the American Federation of Labor for financial support for our purposes for a campaign in Los Angeles.[25] He thinks it a shameful act. I plead guilty. And, Comrade Haywood, it wasn't the first time I and the other members of the National Executive Committee had applied to the American Federation of Labor for financial aid for a cause near and dear to us, for the cost of the workers' cause. [*Applause*.] And these "capitalist" unions had responded like good revolutionary comrades. Comrade Haywood owes a good deal of his life to these reactionary unionists.[26] [*Applause*.] The only reason why I remind Comrade Haywood of it is to prove to him that the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor is not hopelessly capitalistic and corrupt. [*Applause*.]

And now the two other points which Comrade Haywood makes, and those are the important ones. He charges me with not understanding industrial unionism. "Industrial unionism," he says, "comprehends all that socialism comprehends. It is the Socialist Party in working clothes." Hooray! [*Comrade Hillquit clapped his hands.*] Now, boys, if you would work a little harder with your heads and not so hard with you hands, it would be better for you. Now, what proof have you got of that assertion? It's a declaration. It's a phrase. If you don't believe it, then ask Comrade Haywood to make an affidavit to it. But otherwise you have no proof of that assertion. What is the Industrial Workers of the World, the IWW itself? I take it here from a book by an authority on the subject, Mr.

Vincent St. John,[27] secretary of the IWW, and he explains what industrial unionism means. He says:

> The unit of organization is the industrial union. The local industrial union embraces all of the workers in a given industry in a given city. Next, local industrial unions of the same industries have combined into a national union. then next comes the national industrial unions of closely allied industries, combined into departmental organization. Then the industrial departments have combined into a general organization. Then both subdivisions are subdivided into language branches, shop branches, department branches, and finally district councils. And so on into their ups and downs, built in one way and built in the other way.[28]

Tell me, why should any such organization, up and down and right and left, necessarily imply socialism? Are you socialists because we organize the party on the basis of locals, with Julius Gerbers as organizers, or are you socialists because you studied socialism—because, after years of thought and study, you have evolved a socialistic comprehension of the philosophy of the world and of the movements of the world? Which is it? Now then, how do workingmen, upon being reorganized in all these various branches in all directions, become imbued with a thing that requires study and has nothing to do with any form of organization? Just because Comrade Haywood says so; other Industrial Workers of the World say so; and you will have to take their word for it.

Then Comrade Haywood also says that the American Federation of Labor is a capitalist organization. [*Another burst of applause.*] That it has always fought the Socialist Party. That it has always stood for harmony between capital and labor. That all of its members are members of the Civic Federation. That many or most of its members are members of the Militia of Christ. That it is a hopeless thing, in fact, a hostile organization, a capitalistic organization. Now, comrades, I will say this: Contrary to Comrade Haywood's assertion, I am not the attorney for the American Federation of Labor and hold no brief for that organization. But this much is clear to me: that the American Federation of Labor consists of workingmen, not of capitalists. Now, there is no use using phrases. It is also clear to me that the present leaders of the American Federation of Labor are utterly incompetent, utterly reactionary, and often corrupt. But I told that the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor is by no means hopeless. If they were, don't forget that the

American Federation of Labor represents the bulk of organized workers in this country. If they were, our movement would be hopeless. [*Applause*.] If we should not have the hope of eventually converting those 1,175,000 workers to socialism, would we base our hope upon converting, or having the support—already the support—of the 10,437 members of the IWW, as claimed by that organization (and as largely exaggerated, I have no doubt)? Certainly not.

Now I will say I will admit for the moment that the rank and file is reactionary. What of it? Should we abandon them for that reason? Comrades, what have we undertaken to do? When the socialist movement first took root in this country there were perhaps two or three thousand men in this country as against it there were 75 million people—all except those 3,000 bitterly opposed to socialism, anti-socialistic, reactionary, capitalistically inclined. What did the socialists do? Did they say: "This is a hopeless mass?" Did they say: "We can never do anything with them?" Did they say: "Let's organize another independent United States, with a better class of people?" Or did they say: "These are the people whose support we must gain if we are to succeed. They are opposed to us because they don't understand us. They are opposed to us because they are unenlightened. It is up to us to enlighten them?" [*Applause*.]

If the American Federation of Labor was today enlightened socialistically, why, there would be no problem before them. But jus because they are not, we are socialists for the purpose of carrying our socialism to them. And that's our object. Don't get mad. Don't kick. Don't say, "Gompers is no good, for this reason the workers in the American Federation of Labor are hopeless and we will kick them over, together with Hillquit, who represents them, and all the other American Federation of Labor fellows, the Socialist Labor Party, and so on." That is child's indignation. That is not the reasonable action of socialists.

Now, comrades, the American Federation of Labor is not so hopeless. But a very few years ago the rank and file of the organization had been almost exclusively opposed to socialism. How does it stand now? It stands now this way: Within the last few years we have made larger inroads within the American Federation of Labor than in all the past generations combined. Let me give you a few examples. I don't know of any man who is better posted on this general subject than is Max Hayes[29] of Cleveland. Comrade Hayes has been in the labor movement a number of years and is a very close observer of its progress. And this is what he writes about it:

> Big gains are being made for socialism in the unions. Machinists will have four out of five delegates in the American Federation of Labor convention who are socialists. Cigar makers will have two socialists out of five; carmen, two out of four; coal miners will have three and probably four out of seven; tailors, two out of three; Western Federation of Miners, all four; painters, probably four or five; quarry workers, one; ladies' garment workers, probably all. All others scattered.

Now, what does that mean? That it is the men, that they happen to be socialists? It means that they were elected by organizations on a socialist program, on account of the fact that they are socialists, and not in spite of the fact. And if you have reviewed the state of affairs there was four or five years ago, you would know that that signifies a veritable revolution. What is your victory in Schenectady, what is your victory in Milwaukee, what is your victory in all other parts of the country in which you are strong? What is the Los Angeles tremendous vote, the Columbus tremendous vote, the Bridgeport tremendous vote? Do you think it's the IWWites voting for the Socialist candidates? You know better. They are all organized workers, members of the American Federation of Labor.

It is proved to you that the American Federation of Labor is not by any manner of means hopeless. If we continue along the line of the propaganda which we have been following, therefore, within the American Federation of Labor I can well see that the foothold of Samuel Gompers, of John Mitchell, Frank Morrison, and the others is weakening every day; that they are losing their grip on the organization. We are not going to convert them to socialism, but we are going to the rank and file, and if we continue to go to the rank and file, and if we continue to go before them in a straight, helpful, orderly spirit, carrying enlightenment to them instead of phrases and imprecations and curses, I assure you that within five years and no longer the American Federation of Labor and its rank and file will be socialistic. [*Applause*.] [*A voice: "That's what you think."*] I have never undertaken to say what you think, comrade. [*Laughter and applause.*]

Talk of industrial unionism! Industrial unionism is coming. It is not coming by wild phrases. It is not coming by means of the IWW, which as I said was organized about six years ago with a membership claiming to be within 60,000 and 90,000, and which through a process of splits and fights has already developed the magnificent number of 10,000 or thereabouts and already consists of 100 locals—"mixed locals,"

so-called, very badly mixed locals. Take the American Federation of Labor itself. And there again I quote Hayes, because I think he knows what he is talking about. He says:

> Distinct progress is being made toward industrialism in the American Federation of Labor through its departments, which are bing developed as fast as present conditions of growing intelligence of members will permit. First, the building trades are centralized and include from the laborer who digs the cellar to the man who puts on the roof, as well as the woodworkers and others in the shops. Second, the metal trades are working out similar conditions in their departments and are also cooperating with building trades with which they come in contact. Third, the railway workers are organizing their existing divisions in the railway departments, and in the present great strike on the Illinois Central and Harriman lines all shop shopmen, machinists, boilermakers, etc. are out; also carpenters and painters and other workers with them, all told nearly 40,000, and the fighting is having a great moral effect on the railway brotherhood and may revolutionize it. Fourth, the miners are now working on their departments and may merge completely, and Moyer told me in Atlanta that they will probably form a close alliance with the longshoremen, seamen, teamsters, etc. The convention in Indianapolis next week is probably taking another immediate step in this direction. Fifth, the wearing apparel workers are starting to get together, and Secretary Brace, of the tailors, says that they will take in ready-made and even ladies' garment makers if the latter do not come into a separate department. Sixth, the printing trades have a national alliance and cooperate locally and nationally and will come together still more closely. Seventh, the brewery workers have a complete industrial organization. Eighth, the bakers, butchers, hotel, and restaurant employees are discussing plans to form an alliance.

Here are about 300,000 to 400,000 workers within the bosom of the American Federation of Labor sailing rapidly and evenly into the industrial form of organization. And that, I say, comrades, is another hopeful sign for the American labor movement. And I repeat, it is up to us to fall in line and not to kick over the traces at this critical time. [*Applause*.]

V. Summation by Bill Haywood

Well, comrades, I want to call your attention to a statement made by Comrade Hillquit in regard to the British Socialist Party, in which he refers to that organization—which has come out flat-footed urging the railroad workers and seamen of Great Britain to go on a general strike—as a bunch of "cranks," "fanatics," or something of that kind. That organization is now known as the United Socialist Party of England.[30] It met in Manchester on September 30, with 35,000 members (*applause*), representing many detached members of the Independent Labour Party, which Comrade Hillquit says represents the socialist movement of England.[31] Well, if that represents the socialist movement, and Ramsay MacDonald[32] represents the Independent Labour Party or the Labour Party, that movement is as badly in need of fixing as the American Federation of Labor in this country.

Thirty-five thousand dues-paying members in the Socialist Party referred to as "a bunch of freaks" by Comrade Hillquit!

There is one other matter that he mentioned, and that was the number of socialists elected yearly to attend the American Federation of Labor convention. They go there and they come away, the convention having endorsed the Civic Federation by an overwhelming vote and each socialist member recorded as voting in favor of Samuel Gompers. Very few protests recorded against our friend Samuel, who has been offered by the employing class $250,000 if he would kick the radical element out of the American Federation of Labor—that is, the socialists—and organize a trades union to the liking of the capitalists.

I want to call your attention to an assumption of Comrade Hillquit's in the statement made that I said that all of this American Federation of Labor was in the Civic Federation. I said that the American Federation of Labor was composed of 11 members. I meant the executive board. I am quite certain that Comrade Hillquit knew I meant the executive board, that most of the executive board belonged to the Militia of Christ.

When I started my argument against the Americaan Federation of Labor I said there was nothing in common between the policies of pure and simple trades unionism and the fundamental principles of socialism.

[*Applause*.] Socialism is a class organization, representing the working class. The American Federation of Labor is a craft organization and has no consciousness except for those employed in certain given trade; and they have built around themselves walls that are impenetrable—high initiation fees, running as high as $500, which but few workingmen are ever able to pay; technical examinations; closed books; the apprentice system, established not for the purpose of giving a boy an opportunity to learn a trade, but for the purpose of denying the members of the trade unions, even themselves, their own sons, the privilege of learning a trade. [*Applause*.] I make the assertion that every boy, every mother's son, has a right to learn a trade; every father's daughter has a right to learn some domestic art. I further want to assert—and I got if from knowledge gained by visiting the country—that the jails and penitentiaries of this country are filled with young men who have no trade, and a very large percentage of them have been denied the right to learn a trade by the father's trades unions.

Now it is not the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor that I am contending against. I have fought with the American Federation of Labor in practically every great strike that has taken place in the United States in the last ten years. The cloak makers of this city know that I have spoken in this hall in their behalf when we had three overflow meetings in Union Square. The shirtwaist workers know that I was on the picket line with them during their strike. This is true also in Chicago, among the coal miners. The teamsters of the Pacific Coast understand the position that we of the Western Federation of Miners have taken to help them out of their struggle. And I want to say to you, comrades and fellow-workers, the imputation of Comrade Hillquit is unfair. I realize, fully realize that to you, the working class, I owe my life and my liberty, and I thank you from the depths of my heart. But when you freed me from jail you didn't take away from my my principles. Had I wanted to sacrifice the principles upon which I stand I could have done that without going to jail. [*Applause*.]

You, every one, understand that I am an industrial unionist. I never was a trades unionist. I don't believe in trades unionism. I think, in the language of Comrade Hillquit, that their politics are "ethically unjustifiable and tactically suicidal." [*Laughter*.] And I want to say to you that, whatever the outcome of this meeting may be, my position is the position of more of the rank and file of the Socialist Party than Comrade Hillquit can claim. [*Applause*.] In my letter of acceptance when running as a member of the National Executive Committee I made the

statement that I had no desire to be elected under a misapprehension; that I did not believe that the chief function of the Socialist Party would be fulfilled until the party carried to the working class the message of industrial unionism. So I am here tonight bringing you that message. It is a new message. No one has ever accused me of neutrality. I have always urged the working class to organize as one man on the industrial field and I have also urged them to use their political power so that they would be in control of the police and the military power of government, not, as Comrade Hillquit says, after socialism has been established, but so that we can use the power of government against the strikebreakers—instead of, as the capitalists use them now, against the strikers. [*Applause*.]

VI. Summation by Morris Hillquit

I must confess, comrades, the mystery is deepening all the time. Now, it appears Comrade Haywood in speaking against the American Federation of Labor does not mean the Federation of Labor. He means the 11 men who constitute its executive committee.

Comrade Haywood: I mean the policies of the trade unions.

Comrade Hillquit: Now Comrade Haywood means the policies of the trades unions, and not the trades unionists. I must confess, comrades, I can't understand that. If it is the executive committee, the present executive committee of the American Federation of Labor against which our friends direct all of their struggles, it is hardly worthwhile. The executive committee or any officers of the American Federation of Labor represent of necessity the present state of enlightenment of the rank and file. [*Applause*.] And if you get that rank and file better educated, if you get them more progressive than Gompers, Mitchell, and Morrison—Gompers, Mitchell, and Morrison will lead them no longer. [*Applause*.]

I must confess, also, that after that statement of Comrade Haywood's that he believes in the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor I wonder what all this fuss is about. What are we here for tonight? Because we all believe in the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor; we all believe that it should be educated to a better understanding of the class struggle and of socialism; and we all believe that the present leaders of the American Federation of Labor are incompetent and should be supplanted by better men. Where, then does all that violent, that tempestuous and enthusiastic program for industrialism, IWW, etc., come in? It seems to peter out mighty slowly.

Now, there is one unfair method which Comrade Haywood has used in this debate which I want to nail tonight in order to caution comrades in our own party discussion generally not to use, and that is the following: When Comrade Haywood has exhausted his arguments against the position of the socialists who are opposed to rival organizations and the IWW, Comrade Haywood steps forward very quietly and, upon the quiet

assumption that his opponents stand for all that is corrupt in the leadership of the American Federation, he lambastes Gompers, Morrison, and Mitchell—just as if he were at the same time proving anything against his comrades within the Socialist Party who are opposed to him in this notion on industrial unionism or IWW. What evokes your greatest applause?

And, by the way, is it not time that you Socialist Party members, red card members, begin to think and analyze things a little more clearly? Where do you think Comrade Haywood scored the greatest point? Where did you applaud most violently? Why, when he recited to you the calendar of crimes of Samuel Gompers. And what has he got to do with the case? Where is the socialist—IWWite or anti-IWWite—who approves of Gompers and his policies? Where, in all the years of my activity in the Socialist Party, have I ever approved of Samuel Gompers? Why does Comrade Haywood throw Samuel Gompers at me? For the simple reason that the actual issue Comrade Haywood cannot discuss just as glibly, just as plausibly, just as well as he can the misdoings of Samuel Gompers—which we condemn just as much as he condemns. [*Applause*.]

The only difference between us is that while we condemn Samuel Gompers we try to educate the mass within the American Federation of Labor to better principles, better understanding, better and cleaner leadership. Comrade Haywood and his friends, on the other hand, are ready to destroy—to kick over the entire American Federation of Labor on account of these few leaders. That is the actual difference between us, and not the difference which he mentioned.

Comrade Haywood refers to the friendship of the Western Federation of Miners for the rank and file of the American Federation of Labor. The Western Federation of Miners was among the pioneer organizers of the IWW and here is what the editor of *The Miners' Magazine,* the official organ of the Western Federation of Miners, has to say of the subject in the last issue. He says:

> The fact that they (the industrial unionists) remain on the outside, indulging in fulminations and coarse epithets, is conclusive proof that they feel incompetent to enter into the arena of debate, having confidence in their ability to mold those in error to their method of thinking. That the policies of the American Federation of Labor are not all wished for and wanted by intelligent men in the labor movement, no intelligent man can deny; but if the policies of the American Federation of Labor are to be

> revolutionized it can be done from the inside far better than by indulging in condemnation from the outside.[33] [*Applause*.]

This is the organ of your union, Comrade Haywood.

Now, comrades, in conclusion, I presume the entire discussion is had with a view to the approaching convention of the Socialist Party. It is one of the subjects that will come up for discussion. I want to call your attention—you may have forgotten it or never have studied it carefully—to the declaration of the Socialist Party adopted three years ago, and that declaration is as follows:

> Resolved first, That the party has neither the right nor the desire to interfere in any controversy which may exist within the labor union movement over questions of form of organization or methods of action in the industrial struggle, but trusts to the labor organizations themselves to solve these questions and to evolve in the direction of ever closer solidarity and even more effective action on the industrial field.
>
> Second, That it is the interest and the duty of the party to give moral and material support to the labor organizations in all their defensive or aggressive struggles against capitalistic exploitation and for the protection and extension of the rights of wage workers and the betterment of their material and social conditions.[34]

It is customary in any business enterprise or in any other enterprise, when you see your policy fail, when you see your organization collapse to pieces, to think of new methods and to think of new enterprises or devices. When an enterprise is prosperous, successful; when the methods employed have proved their worth, careful, sensible, wise businessmen will continue that policy and strengthen that policy. Within the two years that have elapsed since the last congress,[35] the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party at large has strictly adhered to this declaration. Within these two years we have grown as never before. Within these two years we have for the first time reached the dignity of a true, real political and social factor in this country. Shall we now, while we are still in the ascendant; shall we now, while we are gaining and growing day by day—all at once, without provocation, change front and revert to the tactics which have ruined the Socialist Labor Party and ruined the Socialist Party every time whenever it was undertaken? I say, comrades, that is the issue. And that is the only issue.

As for my myself, I stand today as I stood two years ago, fully by this sensible and wise resolution of the Socialist Party. [*Applause*.]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Julius Gerber (1872–1956), organizer of Local New York, Socialist Party, was in the chair. Gerber, a former sheet metal worker, like Hillquit emigrated from Riga, Latvia, as a boy. He was a member of the Socialist Labor Party from 1890, leaving that organization in the split of 1899.

[2] "Socialist Chiefs Clash in Debate on Party Tactics," *New York Call,* vol. 5, no. 12 (Jan. 12, 1912), 1–2.

[3] The National Civic Federation (NCF) was established in New York City in 1900 as a mechanism to bring together representatives of big business, organized labor, and "the public" to ameliorate labor disputes without resorting to strikes. Although the position of capital in the organization was dominant throughout and the NCF's black-tie banquets were regarded by labor radicals as repugnant, the NCF was credited with advancing modest reform in the areas of child labor, workmen's compensation, and factory safety. The NCF took a moderate, collaborationist line in contrast to the harsh open shop policies advocated by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

[4] "Socialist Chiefs Clash," 2.

[5] Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World, largely the work of Thomas J. Hagerty. The Preamble was originally written in 1905 and slightly modified several times up to 1908, after which it remained largely unchanged until a substantial revision in 1991.

[6] Karl Marx, *Value, Price and Profit* [1898], in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Marx–Engels Collected Works: Vol. 20: Marx and Engels, 1864–68.* (New York: International Publishers, 1984), 149.

[7] The British Socialist Party (BSP) was established by 219 delegates at a unity conference held at Salford the weekend of September 30 to October 1, 1911—less than three months before this debate. The main antecedent of the BSP was the Social Democratic Federation of Henry Hyndman, a small Marxist political party established in 1881. At the time of its formation the BSP was neither the tiny smattering of a few hundred "freaks" characterized by Hillquit nor the virile party of 35,000 depicted by Haywood. In the summer of 1920 the BSP, claiming 6,000 members, joined with the Scottish-based Socialist Labour Party, Sylvia Pankhurst's tiny Workers' Socialist Federation, and the South Wales Socialist Society to form the Communist Party of Great Britain.

[8] The National Civic Federation (NCF) was established in New York City in 1900 as a mechanism to bring together representatives of big business, organized labor, and "the public" to ameliorate labor disputes without resorting to strikes. Although the position of capital in the organization was dominant throughout and the NCF's black-tie banquets were regarded by labor radicals as repugnant, the NCF was credited with advancing modest reform in the areas of child labor, workmen's compensation, and factory safety. The NCF took a moderate, collaborationist line in contrast to the harsh open shop policies advocated by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM).

[9] The Militia of Christ was a Catholic society of trade unionists based in Oberlin, Ohio, with day to day operations handled by its executive secretary, Father Peter E. Dietz. The group included a number of top union officials among its leadership ranks, including Peter J. McArdle of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, John Mitchell of the United Mine Workers, James O'Connell of the International Association of Machinists, and Peter W. Collins of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

[10] Ralph M. Easley (1856–1939) established the National Civic Federation in New York City in 1900 and served as chair of the group's executive council for the rest of his life.

[11] The Independent Labour Party (ILP) was founded 1893 as a result of a split of the Liberal Party, with the Scot Keir Hardie the party's outstanding leader of its formative years. As with the Socialist Party of America, the ILP was a big tent organization including Marxists as well as multiple tendencies of ethical socialists. The ILP helped found the forerunner of the Labour Party in 1900 and remained a constituent part of that organization until the ILP's dissolution in 1975.

[12] The Social Democratic Party (SDF) was a political party established in 1881 by Henry Hyndman. Regarded as the first Marxist party in Great Britain, the SDF was weakened by the departure of its anarchist left in the late 1880s and by its parliamentary-oriented right, who departed for the Independent Labour Party after its formation in 1893. The SDF dissolved to become the primary pillar of the British Socialist Party in 1911.

[13] That is, the Second International.

[14] One suspects that Hillquit here confuses the newly formed British Socialist Party with the Socialist Party of Great Britain, a tiny impossibilist organization formed via a 1904 split of the Social Democratic Federation.

[15] William Howard Taft, Speech at Orchestra Hall, Chicago, Sept. 16, 1910. Haywood's quotation does not precisely match the version published, for example, in the *Indianapolis News,* vol. 40, no. 245 (Sept. 16, 1909), 17. The stenographic report of the debate is not modified here.

[16] This resolution does not seem to have been published in the monthly *Socialist Party Monthly Bulletin* sent out to party members.

[17] These being the members of the National Executive Committee.

[18] Karl Kautsky, *The Class Struggle.* [1892] (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1910), 182.

[19] Henry L. Stimson (1867–1950) was a Republican US attorney for the southern district of New York. He served as secretary of war in the Taft administration, secretary of state for Herbert Hoover, and secretary of war again from 1940 to 1945 for Franklin D. Roosevelt and his successor, Harry Truman.

[20] Morris Hillquit, *Socialism in Theory and Practice.* (New York: Macmillan, 1909), 300–2.

[21] Édouard Vaillant (1840–1915) was the son of a lawyer who came to the socialist movement through the writings of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. He was an active participant in the Paris Commune of 1871 and escaped to Great Britain after its fall, being sentence to death in absentia in 1872.He was a founding member of the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO) and generally adhered to a middle position between the followers of Jules Guesde on the left and the followers of Jean Jaurès on the right. He moved to a position of social-patriotism after the outbreak of World War I.

[22] Jules Guesde (1845–1922) was a radical newspaper editor and politician. A close associate of Paul Lafargue, Guesde was one of the first Marxists in France and during the late 19th century through the 1910s consistently took a left position in the French Workers' Party and its successor, the French Section of the Workers' International (SFIO). Guesde became a nationalist and social-patriot during World War I and was appointed as a minister without portfolio to the unity government of René Vivani in 1914.

[23] August Bebel, *Nicht stehendes Heer, sondern Volkswehr!* [Not a standing army, but a people's militia!] Stuttgart: J.H.W. Dietz, 1898.

[24] Louis Brandeis (1856–1941) was a prominent Harvard-educated attorney from Boston. A progressive, Brandeis was appointed to the United States supreme court by President Woodrow Wilson in 1916.

[25] Reference is to the 1911 campaign of Job Harriman for mayor of Los Angeles.

[26] Allusion is to the 1906–07 illegal arrest, incarceration, and trial of Haywood as part of an alleged assassination conspiracy surrounding the 1905 murder of former Governor Frank Steuenenberg of Idaho. After a sensational trial in which Haywood and his Western Federation of Miners codefendants Charles Moyer and George Pettibone became national causes célèbres, a not guilty verdict was returned by the jury.

[27] Vincent St. John (1876–1929), initially a member of the Western Federation of Miners, was general secretary of the Industrial Workers of the World from 1908 to 1914. St. John was the leading advocate of the IWW's rigid anti-political action line. Although he left the organization in 1915, St. John was nevertheless arrested in the dragnet for Wobblies during World War I. He was convicted in the May 1918 mass trial of 101 IWW members and remained in prison until pardoned by President Warren G. Harding in 1923.

[28] Vincent St. John, *The IWW: Its History, Structure, and Methods.* (New Castle, PA: IWW Publishing Bureau, n.d. [c. 1911]). This pamphlet was one of the fundamental texts of the IWW and was revised multiple times. The early version used by Hillquit has not been located by the editor.

[29] Max S. Hayes (1866–1945) worked on the staff of the *Cleveland Press* from 1881 to 1890. He was the founder and editor of the *Cleveland Citizen,* launched in January 1891 in support of the People's Party. He became a member of the Socialist Labor Party in the 1890s and broke with the organization during the 1899 split over the issue of dual unionism. Hayes was initially slated to run for vice-president in 1900 on the ticket of the Social Democratic Party with headquarters in Springfield but stood down when Eugene V. Debs of the Social Democratic Party with headquarters in Chicago agreed to run a joint campaign. Hayes was an outspoken opponent of the IWW from the time of its foundation in 1905 and regularly attended AF of L conventions in an effort to rally socialist forces. In 1911 he stood for AF of L president against Samuel Gompers, garnering 30% of the vote. Although he remained a member of the Socialist Party during the difficult war years, he resigned in May 1919 when the left wing faction fight erupted. Hayes ran for vice-president in 1920 on the ticket of the Farmer-Labor Party. He continued to edit the *Cleveland Citizen* until 1939.

[30] The name of the organization remained unchanged as the British Socialist Party from the time of its September 1911 formation until its July 1920 absorption into the new Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB).

[31] According to historian Mark Bevir, while the new British Socialist Party did include some defectors from the Independent Labour Party, among other groups, it was "effectively just the SDF under a new name." See: Mark Bevir, *The Making of British Socialism.* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 83.

[32] James Ramsay MacDonald (1866–1937) was one of the top leaders of the Independent Labour Party and the Labour Party. He was twice prime minister of Great Britain, heading a short-lived minority government in 1924 and the Labour–Liberal coalition government of 1929–31. He was premier of a national government with the Tories and the Liberals from 1931–35.

[33] The editor of *Miners' Magazine,* a weekly, was John M. O'Neill. The publication took a regular Socialist Party line under his editorship, deeply hostile to the IWW.

[34] Resolution of the 1908 National Convention of the Socialist Party, reaffirmed by the 1910 National Congress. The "neither the right nor the desire" language matched the phraseology used by the American Federation of Labor in 1908, which indicated it had "neither the right nor the desire" to tell its members how to vote in the elections.

[35] The Socialist Party briefly sought to hold "national congresses" in the even years between regularly scheduled quadrennial presidential nominating conventions to handle party organizational business. Despite the limited sized of these gatherings, limited to 100 delegates in 1910, these were eliminated for reasons of economy. Only the 1910 National Congress was held.

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Footnotes are by Tim Davenport. Quotations have been checked to the printed original whenever possible and minor corrections silently made.

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1000 Flowers Publishing
5010 NW Shasta Ave.
Corvallis, OR 97330

MutantPop@aol.com